

Certification Policy 02-C – Acceptable High School Diplomas

Background:

Several issues regarding the high school diploma requirement are unresolved by current rule language.

Does the high school diploma have to be from a United States accredited high school?

- If so, what sort of accreditation (Texas Education Agency (TEA); another state's accreditation within the United States or its possessions) is required?
- If not, what is the minimum? Is a diploma from an unaccredited private school or home school allowable?
- Will TDH accept a diploma from another nation?

Statute Reference: None

Rule Reference:

§157.33(a)(2) A candidate for EMS certification shall have a high school diploma or general education diploma (GED) certificate

Discussion:

TEA provides the information below for home-schooled students who want to enroll into public school.

The State of Texas does not award a diploma to students that are home schooled. In the event a home-schooled student wishes to enter a public school, most districts have policies and procedures in place to assess the mastery level of courses that students in home schools have taken. The results of the assessment may be used for grade placement and/or award of credit.

See TEA web page <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/home.school/homeItr.html>

***Students transferring from home schools should be afforded the same treatment as students transferring from unaccredited private schools. Awarding of credit for courses taken may be determined by reviewing the curriculum and/or work of the student, or by using appropriate assessments.**

If assessments are utilized for determining placement, the agency would suggest the following guidelines for assessing students: 2) Secondary students may be assessed using the credit-by-examination methods for individual subject areas. See TEA web page <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/taa/home000114.html>

This indicates TEA would not automatically or routinely accept home school or private school courses or credentials without evaluation, and a test-out process. That logic can be applied to diplomas as well.

TDH's practice has been to accept diplomas only from accredited high schools which could be verified by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), another state's accreditation body, or GED certificates. If the candidate does not have a diploma from an accredited high school or accredited private school (including TEA or other states' accredited home schools), we require a GED. Similarly, TDH cannot determine the equivalency of another nation's high school diploma, therefore we do not accept non-USA high school diplomas unless the candidate has had the transcript evaluated by a foreign credentials evaluation service (see <http://www.naces.org>).

Policy:

The high school diploma required for EMS certification candidates must be from an accredited public or private high school, as recognized by TEA (see http://askted.tea.state.tx.us/org-bin/menus/ORG_MAIN_B) or the corresponding state agency in other states of the USA. Out of country applicants must have their high school education evaluated by a foreign credentials evaluation service (see <http://www.naces.org>) that attests to its equivalency. A home school diploma is acceptable if it is accompanied by an authentic letter of acceptance into a regionally accredited college (see <http://www.utexas.edu/world/comcol/state/> and/or <http://www.utexas.edu/world/univ/state/index.html>), indicating the candidate's education had been evaluated by the college.

Kathryn C. Perkins, R.N., M.B.A

Chief, Bureau of Emergency Management

Signature date September 11, 2002

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